

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Favorable reconsideration of this application in view of the above amendments and in light of the following discussion is respectfully requested.

Claims 14-30 and 32-36 are pending. The present response amends Claims 14, 15 and 35. No new matter is introduced.

The Office Action rejected Claims 14, 16, 17, 24-30, 32-34 and 36 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over Yamada (U.S. Patent No. 5,628,700). In addition, the Office Action objected to Claims 15, 18-23 and 35, but indicated that these claims would be allowable if rewritten in independent form.

The indication of allowable subject matter is acknowledged with appreciation. In response to the indication of allowable subject matter, Claims 15 and 35 are rewritten in independent form. Accordingly, Claim 15, Claims 18-23 depending therefrom, and Claim 35 are believed to be in condition for allowance, as acknowledged at page 3 of the Office Action.

Amended Claim 1 clarifies that the first and second bearings that support the pulley shaft are spaced apart from each other in an axial direction of the pulley shaft on opposite sides of a sheave that is supported by the pulley shaft.

Turning to the cited reference, the Office Action proposes to modify the drive shaft 24 so as to include an additional bearing in the same manner as on the follower shaft 62 in Figure 1 of Yamada, which illustrates bearings that are located on opposite sides of a drive gear 72. However, even if the proposed modification was performed, the resulting structure would not include first and second bearings that are on opposite sides of a sheave that is supported by the drive shaft 24. Instead, at best, the new set of bearings would be on the

same side as any set of bearings that would satisfy the limitation of having no radially extending oil passages between such bearings and the new set of bearings.

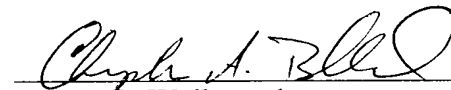
Accordingly, Yamada fails to disclose or suggest all the features recited in amended Claim 1. It is submitted Claim 1 and the claims depending therefrom are in condition for allowance.

For the reasons discussed above, no further issues are believed to be outstanding in the present application, and the present application is believed to be in condition for allowance. Therefore, a Notice of Allowance for Claims 14-30 and 32-36 is earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner deem that any further action is necessary to place the present application in even better form for allowance, the Examiner is encouraged to contact Applicants' undersigned representative at the below-listed telephone number.

Respectfully submitted,

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